



№ 455 – April 2025

Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

In the end of 2024 the total number of laying hens increases by 18.7% compared to 31st December 2023 amounting to 4.392 million. The number of hens in parent flocks and the number of growing pullets decrease compared to 2023 by 23.4% and 15.2% respectively to 0.884 million hens in parent flocks and to 1.467 million growing pullets. In comparison to 2023 the total number of laying hens and growing pullets increases 2.4% to 6.743 million (Table 1).

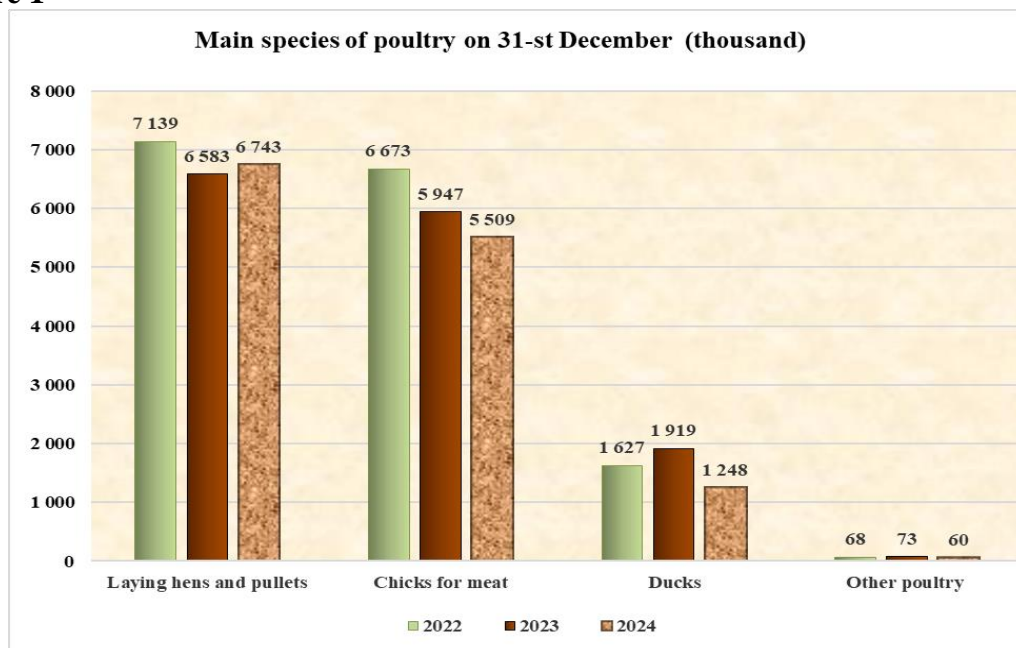
The number of poultry farms raising laying hens and growing pullets decreases and at the end of 2024 the number is 13 093, which is 8.7% less than 2023 (Table 2).

The number of poultry farms raising broilers intended to be fattened on 31st December 2024 decreases 7.4% compared to 2023 (Table 3). In 2024, 54.2 million chicken broilers are slaughtered (+6.5%) and 96.6 thousand tons meat is produced – 6.2% more than in 2023.

The number of turkeys is 9 thousand, ducks are 1 248 thousand (-35.0%). In 2024 over 7.1 million ducks are slaughtered (-2.7%). The total number of domestic poultry decreases (-6.6%) according to 31st December 2023 to 13.6 million.

The decrease in the number of laying hens in the end of 2023 and in the beginning of 2024 as a result of High pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) outbreaks which reflected on egg production in 2024. The production of eggs is 15.8% less than 2023 or 1.176 billion eggs in total, of which 1.157 billion from hens (-16.3%), the production of eggs for human consumption decreases 19.6%, but the breeding eggs production increases 3.2%.

Figure 1



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatistics Department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

Results and analyses

**Main species of poultry in Bulgaria on 31st December 2024
by statistical regions (NUTS2)**

Table 1

(thousand heads)

Statistical region	Hens and Pullets	Broilers	Chickens total	Turkeys	Ducks	Other poultry	Total poultry	Change 2024/2023
Bulgaria	6 742.7	5 508.8	12 251.5	8.7	1 248.2	51.1	13 559.5	-6.6%
<i>Severna and Yugoiztochna Bulgaria</i>	<i>5 303.0</i>	<i>5 445.6</i>	<i>10 748.6</i>	<i>3.7</i>	<i>630.7</i>	<i>17.5</i>	<i>11 400.5</i>	<i>-6.7%</i>
Severozapaden	c	c	769.5	1.6	115.0	2.0	888.1	-47.1%
Severen tsentralen	2 219.6	3 882.4	6 102.0	0.2	123.4	1.1	6 226.7	29.1%
Severoiztochen	1 686.8	1 220.0	2 906.8	0.7	93.0	1.3	3 001.8	-3.7%
Yugoiztochen	c	c	970.3	1.2	299.3	13.1	1 283.9	-50.4%
<i>Yuzhna and Yuzhna centralna Bulgaria</i>	<i>1 439.7</i>	<i>63.2</i>	<i>1 502.9</i>	<i>5.0</i>	<i>617.5</i>	<i>33.6</i>	<i>2 159.0</i>	<i>-6.5%</i>
Yugozapaden	c	c	300.3	1.3	1.9	31.3	334.8	2.1%
Yuzhen tsentralen	c	c	1 202.6	3.7	615.6	2.3	1 824.2	-7.9%
Change 2024/2023	2.4%	-7.4%	-2.2%	-42.0%	-35.0%	-11.3%	-6.6%	

c - confidential data

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics Department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

In the end of 2024 the farms with laying hens and pullets are 8.7% less compared to 2023. The number of small poultry farms with 1 to 99 heads decreases (-8.8%), and the number of poultry in them is 6.6% less (Table 2). Poultry farms raising 100 thousand and more laying hens and pullets are 16 (-11.1%), and they are raising 4 556 thousand heads (-0.9%).

On 31st December 2024 the number of laying hens is 4 392 thousand – 18.7% more than in 2023, laying hens of parent flocks are 834 thousand (-23.4%). The number of growing pullets in the end of 2024 is 1 467 thousand or they decrease by 15.2% compared to 2023.

The laying turkeys are 5.0 thousand – 6.8% less than in 2023. The number of turkeys for fattening on 31.12.2024 is 3.7 thousand.

In the end of 2024 laying ducks and growing ducks are 137.5 thousand (+26.5%).

In 2024 there is a decrease of the number of quails by 1.7%. The number of laying birds increases 5.5% to 37.4 thousand.

Table 2

Laying hens and pullets farms according to the number of poultry per farm on 31st December 2024

Number of poultry per farm	Farms		Laying hens and pullets	
	Number	Change 2024/2023	Thousand heads	Change 2024/2023
1 ÷ 99	12 929	-8.8%	197	-6.6%
100 ÷ 9 999	101	1.0%	163	-24.9%
10 000 ÷ 99 999	47	4.4%	1 827	17.2%
100 000 and more	16	-11.1%	4 556	-0.9%
Total:	13 093	-8.7%	6 743	2.4%

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

The number of farms raising broilers on 31st December 2024 decreases 23.5% compared to 2023. Poultry farms raising to 10 000 thousand birds decrease 51.6%, the number of poultry raised in them decreases by 34.8% (Table 3). The number of farms with 10 thousand and more chicken broilers is 93 – 22.4% more than in the end of 2023, and the amount of poultry raised in them 5 464 thousand or 99.2% from all raising broilers in the country.

Table 3

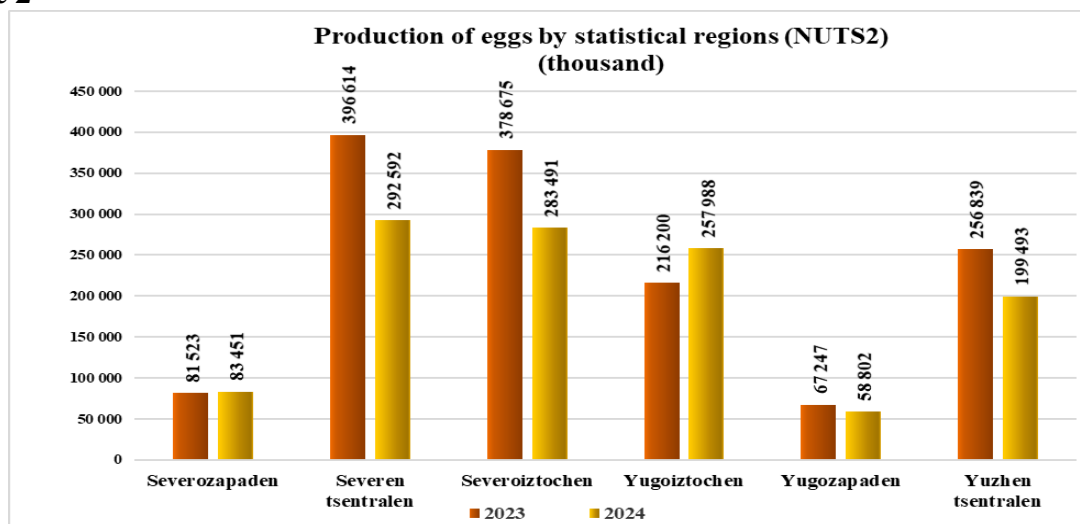
Distribution of poultry farms and broilers raised according to the number of poultry per farm on 31st December 2024

Number of poultry per farm	Farms		Broilers	
	Number	Change 2024/2023	Thousand heads	Change 2024/2023
1 ÷ 199	50	-54.1%	1	-50.0%
200 ÷ 9 999	10	-33.3%	44	-34.3%
10 000 ÷ 99 999	80	23.1%	2 633	10.8%
100 000 и повече	13	18.2%	2 831	-19.2%
Общо:	153	-23.5%	5 509	-7.4%

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

Production of eggs in 2024

The eggs produced in Bulgaria in 2024 are 1 175 817 thousand or 15.8% less than in the previous year. Eggs from hens are 1 157 097 thousand (-16.3%) – of which 951 818 thousand are eggs for human consumption (19.6% less than 2023), the breeding eggs from hens are 205 279 thousand or 3.2% more.

Figure 2

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria

Eggs from hens are 98.4% from all eggs produced in 2024, quail eggs are 0.6%, duck eggs are 0.9%. Eggs for human consumption from all poultry species are 84.7% of total egg produced in 2024.

Quail eggs are 7.4 thousand, which is 11.1% more than in 2023. Duck eggs are 11.1 thousand (+46.2%).

Table 4

Production of eggs in 2024 by statistical regions (thousand)

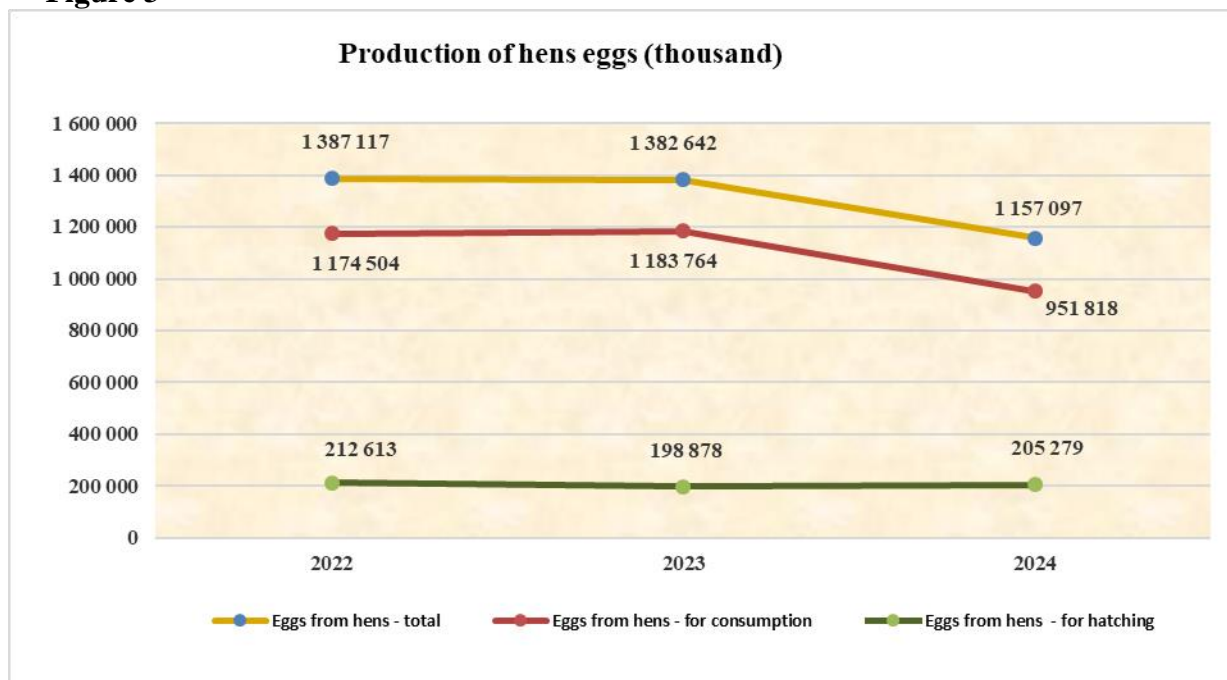
Statistical regions	Eggs from hens		Eggs from other poultry	Total
	Total	of which for human consumption		
Bulgaria	1 157 097	951 818	18 720	1 175 817
<i>Severna and Yugoiztochna Bulgaria</i>	<i>906 192</i>	<i>708 005</i>	<i>11 330</i>	<i>917 522</i>
Severozapaden	83 004	77 271	447	83 451
Severen tsentralen	290 971	180 672	1 621	292 592
Severoiztochen	283 431	262 248	60	283 491
Yugoiztochen	248 786	187 814	9 202	257 988
<i>Yuzhna and Yuzhna centralna Bulgaria</i>	<i>250 905</i>	<i>243 813</i>	<i>7 390</i>	<i>258 295</i>
Yugozapaden	54 306	47 300	4 496	58 802
Yuzhen tsentralen	196 599	196 513	2 894	199 493

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

By statistical region, the leader in egg production is Severen tsentralen region (24.9%), followed by Severoiztochen region with 24.1% and Yugoiztochen region 21.9% from total egg production. The first place of hens eggs produced for human consumption is for Severoiztochen region with 27.6%, followed by Yuzhen tsentralen region with 20.6% and Yugoiztochen region with 19.7%. Of the produced 216 388 thousand breeding eggs, 94.9% are eggs from hens and 5.1% from ducks. The highest quantity of produced breeding eggs is in Severen tsentralen region (51.7%) and in Yugoiztochen region – 31.2% from the total egg production.

Production of hens eggs

Figure 3



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatistics department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

The total weight of eggs produced in 2024 is 71 910 tons or 15.2% less compared to 2023. The average weight of hens eggs is 61.2 grams, quails eggs – 12.9 grams, ducks eggs – 86.0 grams.

Table 5

Weight of eggs produced in 2024

Type of eggs	Total eggs (thousand)	Average egg weight (grams)	Total egg weight (tons)
From hens	1 157 097	61.2	70 833
incl. for hatching	205 279		
- for meat	192 984		
- for laying hens	9 406		
- mixed	2 889		
From turkeys	126	80.8	10
From ducks	11 097	86.0	954
From geese	101	145.2	15
From quails	7 377	12.9	95
From ostriches	1	1 433.0	2
From guinea fowl	18	40.7	1
Total eggs:	1 175 817	///	71 910

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatistics department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

Poultry meat production in 2024

The number of slaughtered poultry in 2024 is 64.6 millions, and the meat produced is over 125 thousand tons. The increase is 2.7% compared to 2023.

According to the preliminary data, poultry meat production in slaughterhouses in 2024 is 2.2% more than in 2023, as the meat produced from chickens increases 5.0%, but the meat produced from ducks decreases 8.4%. 66.5% more poultry are slaughtered on farms, the meat production increases 45.4% compared to 2023.

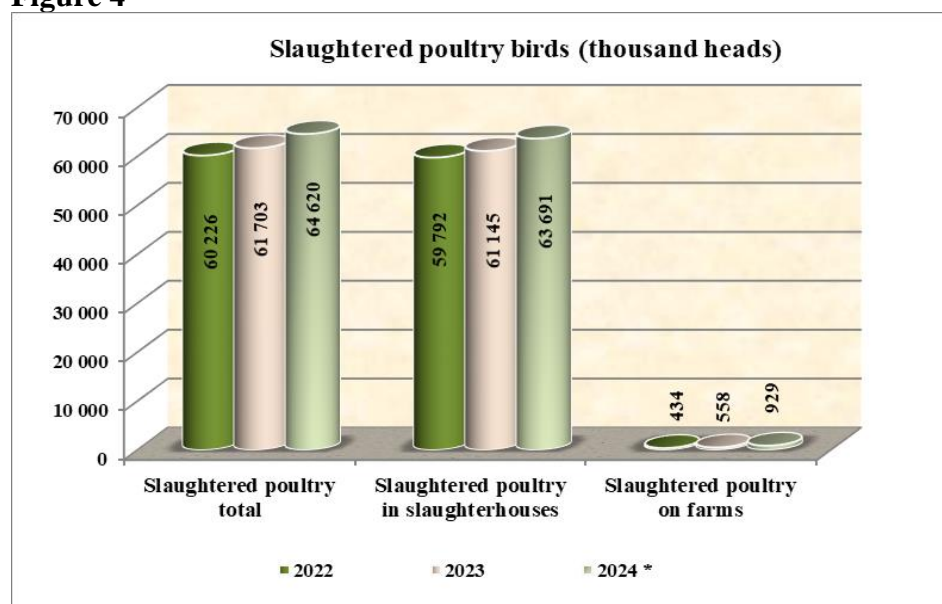
Table 6

Poultry meat production on farms - 2024

Poultry species	Slaughtered poultry on farms	Total live weight	Carcass weight
	(thousand heads)	(tons)	(tons)
Chicken	895	2 214	1 663
Ducks	6	42	29
Other poultry species	28	57	43
Total	929	2 313	1 735

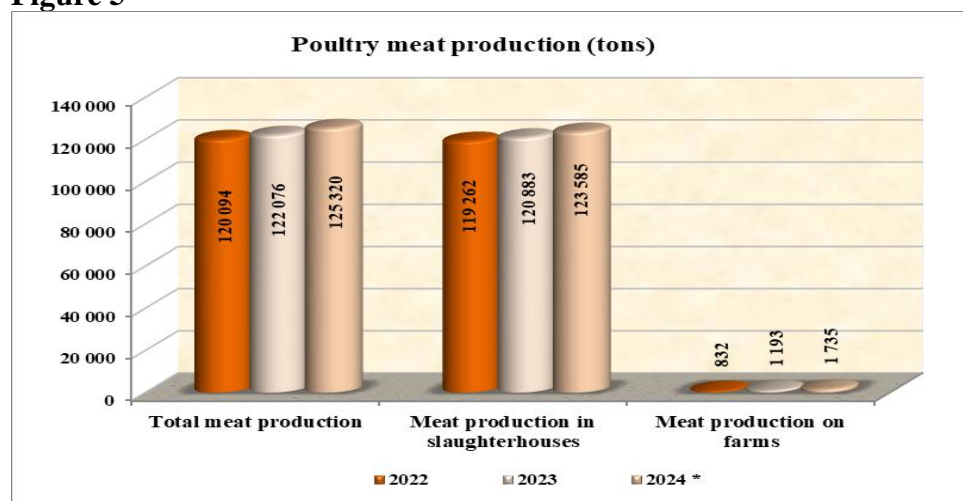
Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

Figure 4



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

Figure 5



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostistics department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

Activity of hatcheries in Bulgaria – 2024

Table 7

Poultry species	Hatcheries (number)	Eggs for hatching (thousand)	Chicks hatched (thousand heads)	Share of total number of eggs placed (%)
Hens, of which:	62	109 883	79 173	88.90%
– for meat	13	101 285	75 609	81.95%
– for laying hens	46	7 989	3 107	6.46%
– mixed	12	609	457	0.49%
Turkeys	19	56	38	0.05%
Ducks	12	13 555	7 526	10.97%
Other poultry	16	97	67	0.08%
Total	81	123 591	86 804	100.00%

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatics department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

The eggs placed for incubation are 123.6 million, of which 88.9% are from hens. 101.3 million (81.9% from all eggs) eggs are placed in the production of chicken broilers, 8.0 million are placed in the production of laying hens and 13.6 million eggs are placed for ducks. The chicks hatched in 2024 are almost 87 million in total, of which 75.6 million are chicks from specialized hybrids for meat production, 7.5 million ducks are mainly for foie gras production and 3.1 million sexed female chicks for laying hens.

Table 8

Main species of poultry in Bulgaria on 31 st December 2024							
(thousand heads)							
Year	Laying hens and Pullets	Broilers	Chickens total	Turkeys	Ducks	Other poultry	Poultry total
2015	6 980	7 278	14 258	28	1 229	85	15 600
2016	7 158	5 290	12 448	32	1 128	92	13 700
2017	6 898	5 966	12 864	30	1 666	196	14 756
2018	6 951	6 921	13 872	35	1 408	204	15 519
2019	7 107	6 635	13 742	23	1 573	227	15 565
2020	7 062	5 349	12 411	21	1 360	172	13 964
2021	6 659	5 517	12 176	16	1 889	87	14 168
2022	7 139	6 673	13 812	8	1 627	60	15 507
2023	6 583	5 947	12 530	15	1 919	58	14 522
2024	6 743	5 509	12 252	9	1 248	51	13 560

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatics department, Poultry breeding in Bulgaria in 2024

The purpose of the survey is to determine:

- Poultry bird number by type and species on 31st December, raised in poultry farms (chickens, ducks, turkeys, geese, quails, ostriches and guinea fowls);
- Production of eggs for human consumption and for hatching by type – for laying hens, for meat or mixed;
- Realisation of cull laying hens and poultry for fattening – submitted for slaughtering in slaughterhouses, slaughtered on farms, sale of live poultry;
- Activity of hatcheries – the number of eggs placed for hatching and chicks hatched.

The survey information is used for analyses and programs in the sector and for informed decision-making in the implementation of agrarian policy in poultry farming. The legal framework in Bulgaria on the bases of which statistical survey is conducted is the National Statistical Program. The results of the conducted survey correspond to the requirements of Regulation (EC) No. 617/2008 and the gentleman's agreement between the member states and Eurostat for statistical data on the number of stock laying hens and production of eggs for human consumption.

Scope of the survey: The results cover the number of poultry birds by species – chickens, broilers, turkeys, ducks, geese, etc., raised in poultry farms of different size located in the country and the production of egg.

Definitions for eggs, chicks and domestic poultry birds by species, within the scope in statistics:

1. **Eggs for hatching** – poultry eggs for hatching means poultry eggs falling within subheadings 0407 11 and 0407 19 of the Combined Nomenclature intended for the production of chicks, classified by species, category and type and identified in accordance with Regulation (EU) N617/2008, produced in the Community or imported from third countries.

2. **Chicks** –live farmyard poultry the weight of which does not exceeds 185 grams, either produced in the Community or imported from third countries and falling within subheadings 0105 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 of the Combined Nomenclature, of the following categories:

a) **Utility chicks:** chicks of one of the following types:

- Chicks for meat (table type chicks): chicks intended to be fattened and slaughtered before reaching sexual maturity;
- Laying chicks: chicks intended to be raised with a view to the production of eggs for consumption;
- Dual-purpose chicks: chicks intended either for laying or for meat (mixed).

b) **Parent stock chicks:** chicks intended for the production of eggs for stock chickens.

3. **Hatchery** – an establishment for incubating eggs, hatching and supplying chicks.

4. Poultry species:

- Roosters, hens, chickens (*Gallus gallus*)
- Turkeys (*Meleagris spp.*)
- Ducks (*Anas spp.*, *Cairina moschata*)
- Geese (*Anser anser domesticus*)
- Guinea fowls (*Numida meleagris domesticus*)
- Other poultry: ostriches, quails

The survey questionnaire includes farm administrative information, number of poultry on 31st December, production of eggs, submitted fattened poultry for slaughter in a slaughterhouse and slaughtering on the farm, eggs placed for hatching and chicks in 2024.

Confidentiality – the national confidentiality rules are defined in the Statistics Act. According to Art. 25 individual statistical data as well as statistical information that summarizes data for less than three statistical units or for an aggregate in which the relative share of the value of a studied parameter of one unit is over 85 percent of the total value of this parameter for all units of the population cannot be disclosed or provided. Individual data obtained for the purposes of statistical survey cannot be used as evidence before executive and judicial authorities.

Accessibility and transparency – the data on number of poultry, production of eggs, meat production and activity of hatcheries is available to users on the Ministry of Agriculture and Food website: <http://www.mzh.government.bg/bg/statistika-i-analizi/izsledvane-zhivotnovdstvo/danni/>, according to the deadline established in the National Statistical Program.

Main results are published in the Results and Analysis series newsletter. The data are published in the Statistical Reference Book (Agrostatistics Department) and the Statistical Yearbook (NSI), and also transmitted to Eurostat. Additional information, beyond the published one, for all characteristics is available and provided upon request observing the requirements of the Statistics Act.

The sample of poultry farms, included for surveying covers 1 568 poultry farms and is elaborated on the basis of the results of the Agricultural census'2020. New holdings established after 2020 are added to the survey list. Farms rearing at least 100 laying hens or at least 200 broilers or at least 100 other poultry (turkeys + geese + ducks + other poultry) or at least 1 ostrich are exhaustively surveyed.

The survey is realized by experts on agricultural statistics in the regional offices at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the municipal Agriculture Services.

The statistical regions cited in the publication are in accordance with the requirements of the general classification of territorial units for statistical purposes applied in the European Union (NUTS), according to Regulation (EU) No. 31/2011. Statistical regions, on second (NUTS 2) level, are as follows:

- **Severozapaden:** Vidin, Vratsa, Montana, Lovech, Pleven;
- **Severen tsentralen:** Veliko Tarnovo, Gabrovo, Ruse, Silistra, Razgrad;
- **Severoiztochen:** Varna, Dobrich, Targovishte, Shoumen;
- **Yugoiztochen:** Burgas, Sliven, Stara Zagora, Yambol;
- **Yugozapaden:** Blagoevgrad, Kyustendil, Pernik, Sofia-cap., Sofia region;
- **Yuzhen tsentralen:** Kardzhali, Pazardzhik, Plovdiv, Smolyan, Haskovo.

The publication is editorially completed on 15.04.2025

Editor:
Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatistics Department

For more information:

Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agrostatistics Department

E-mail: agrostat@mzh.government.bg
Web site of MAF – <http://www.mzh.government.bg>